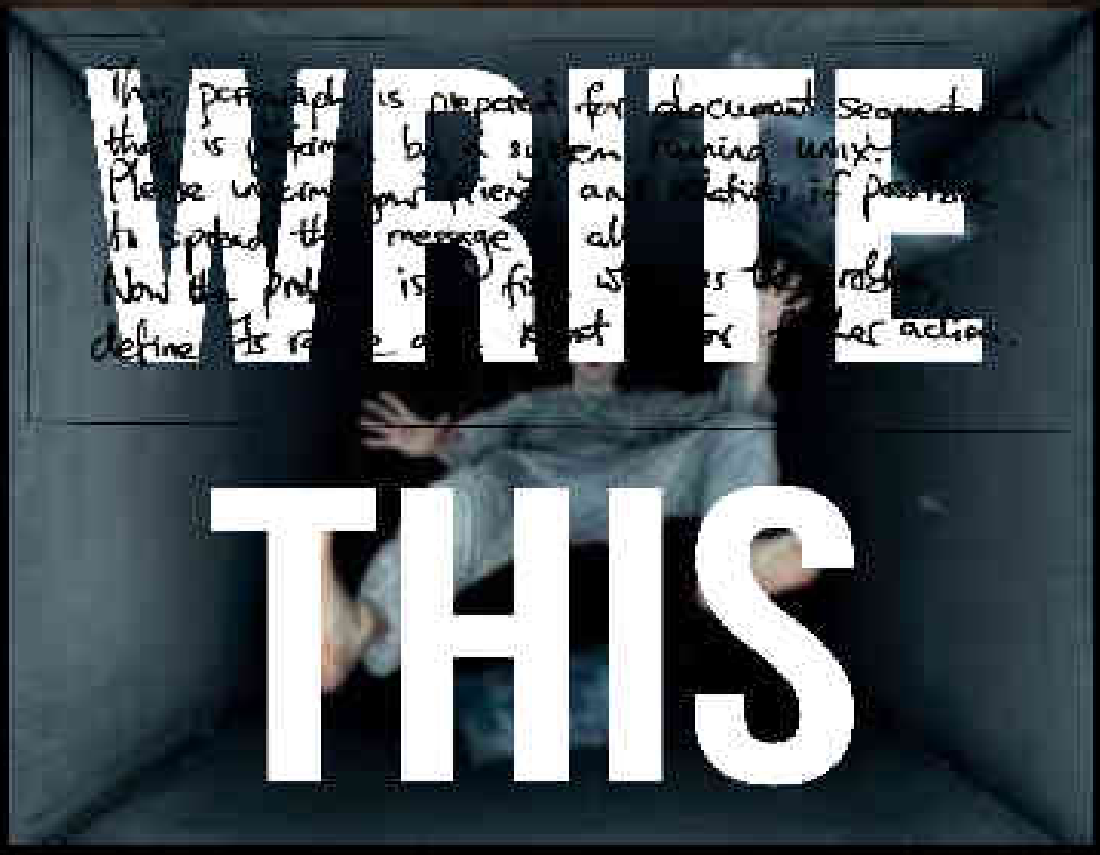
ONLY I CAN WRITE THIS



by
_Manjunath V.C

Table of contents

1. ABOUT AUTHOR
2. PROLOGUE
3. Chapter 1– THE BOOK I NEVER WROTE
4. CHAPTER 2 – I'M NOT THE ONE FOLLOWING HIM ANYMORE
5. CHAPTER 3 – A STRANGER LOGGED INTO MY MIND
6. CHAPTER 4 – The Pen Isn't In Your Hand Anymore
7. CHAPTER 5 – I WAS NEVER THE NARRATOR
8. CHAPTER 6 – THE THINGS I NEVER WROTE
9. CHAPTER 7 – THE MAN WHO READ MY MIND
10. CHAPTER 8 – THE WRITER WHO NEVER EXISTED
11. CHAPTER 9 – THE TRUTH THAT COMES TOO EARLY
12. CHAPTER 10 – THE CHARACTER WHO READ ME
13. CHAPTER 11 – THE PAGE THAT READ YOU BACK
14. CHAPTER 12 – THE AUTHOR WHO NEVER EXISTED
15. CHAPTER 13 – AN ERROR IN THE SYSTEM
16. CHAPTER 14 – THE MAN WHO WROTE ME
17. CHAPTER 15 – THE DELETED CHAPTER
18. CHAPTER 16 – SOMETHING
19. CHAPTER 17 – THE WRITER WHO WAS NEVER BORN
20. CHAPTER 18 – THE GHOSTWRITER
21. Chapter 19 – THE UNFINISHED ENDING
22. Chapter 20 – ONLY I CAN WRITE THIS
23. I NEED TO SAY YOU THIS

ABOUT AUTHOR

About the Author

I’m Manjunath V.C., known to some as Bobby, and I’m 19 years old.

I’ve never believed in staying limited to one path. From academics to creativity, leadership to innovation, I’ve explored every field that challenged me and left my mark. I don’t say that to impress you. I say it because I’ve always believed in pushing beyond what’s expected.

Writing, for me, isn’t just a passion — it’s a reflection of everything I observe, fear, question, and feel. I don’t write to escape reality. I write to dissect it. To understand people their darkness, their silence, their chaos and then turn it into stories that stay with you long after you close the book.

This is more than just words on paper. This is me unfiltered, unpredictable, and unapologetically real.

If you’ve reached this far, maybe we’ve already connected.
If not, you can always find me in Instagram: @wakeup._.bobby

PROLOGUE

This is the beginning of something unforgettable.

PROLOGUE

Title: Only I Can Write This
Author: Manjunath V.C

> Some stories are fiction.
Some stories are forgotten.

And some stories...
are reading you.

This book was never written to entertain you.
It was written to trap you.

You’ve already started.
You’ve already been seen.

And once you reach the final chapter,
it’ll already be too late.

You didn’t choose this book.

It chose you.

Chapter 1– THE BOOK I NEVER WROTE

> “I didn’t write this book.
I only turned the pages.”

I don’t know when it arrived.

There was no courier. No name on the cover. Just a plain black notebook, left at my desk like a curse without a signature.

I thought maybe I’d ordered it online and forgotten. My shelves were already crowded with half-read novels, dusty journals, and rejection letters from publishers who said “You have potential, but no structure.”

I had structure. I just never had a story.

Until this.

At first, it was empty.
Page after page of untouched, smooth paper.
But on the last page — the very last — was a single line.

> “Only I can write this.”

In my own handwriting.

I stared at it for a long time. I hadn’t written it. I was sure.

But I picked up my pen anyway.

I wrote one sentence. Just to see if ink even stuck to this strange paper.

> “A boy walks into a café and sees a man who looks exactly like him.”

And that was it.

I closed the book. Laughed a little.

Probably some prank from my idiot friends. Or maybe I did buy it myself during one of my blackout nights. I drink too much coffee, too little water, and sleep like a corpse.

But the next day…

I walked into my usual café.

And saw him.

He was sitting by the window. Reading a book.
My face. My hair. My hoodie.
Even the same nervous tapping of fingers on the table.

I froze. Then left.

Didn’t order coffee. Didn’t ask questions.

Just walked out.

That night, I opened the book again.

The words I wrote were gone.

But now the page read:

> “You saw him.
Now write the next one.”

I didn’t sleep.

The notebook sat on my desk, breathing silently.
I could feel it watching.

The next night, I wrote again. Just a line.

> “The boy follows him home.”

And that’s when the fun began.

He didn’t see me behind him.
Didn’t hear my shoes on the concrete.
And when he unlocked his apartment — I recognized it.

Because it was mine.

CHAPTER 2 – I'M NOT THE ONE FOLLOWING HIM ANYMORE

I didn't sleep.

I locked my door. Turned off my phone. Pushed my desk against the entrance like some ancient survival instinct kicked in.

Because if he lived in my apartment…

Then where the hell was I?

Morning came.

Sunlight poured through the blinds like it was any normal day.

The apartment looked the same. My desk, my bed, my bookshelf. Even the cracked mirror I've ignored for two years.

But something was off.

The notebook had moved.

It wasn’t on the desk where I left it.

It was on my bed. Open.

Same ink. Same handwriting. Same creepy calmness.

> “Now he’s writing too.”

I didn’t understand it.
Until I got the notification on my phone.

A new blog post. From my old writing site.
I hadn’t used that in years.

The title?

> “Chapter 2 — Only I Can Write This”

I clicked.

It was word-for-word everything I'd written in the notebook. Everything. Down to the mistake I scratched out halfway.

The post ended with something I never wrote:

> "He doesn't know yet. But soon, he will."

I rushed outside. I had to find him.

Same café. Same corner. Same window seat.

He was there.

But this time, he looked up.
And waved.

Like we'd known each other for years.

"Sit," he said.

I did.

We looked at each other for a while.
It was like staring into a mirror that blinked first.

Then he said something I didn’t expect.

> “I liked how you ended Chapter 1. You kept it sharp. Clean. Real.”

“What are you talking about?”

He smiled.

> “You’re writing me. And I’m writing you.
And only one of us gets to finish the story.”

I laughed.

Out of fear, or confusion, or both.

But he wasn’t joking.

He pulled out his own notebook — identical to mine.
Flipped it open. Showed me the last thing he wrote:

> “The real one begins to question if he’s even real.”

Then he slid it across the table.
“Your turn.”

I stood up and left.

That night, I stared at my notebook for hours.
Didn’t write a word.

Then I saw my laptop light up.
An anonymous message.

> “You’re doing great.
But remember — you only get to write this if I let you.”

The next morning…

I wasn’t in my apartment.

I was in his.

And mine was gone.

As if it never existed.

CHAPTER 3 – A STRANGER LOGGED INTO MY MIND

I didn’t move for hours.

The room I woke up in was a replica of mine—
but too perfect.
Like someone tried rebuilding it from memory.

Except they got some details wrong.

My pen holder was on the left, not the right.

The wall poster I tore months ago was pristine here.

My cracked mirror? Brand new. Flawless.

It was like someone pressed “undo” on my life.

I opened the closet.

Only his clothes were there.

But they looked like mine.

A slight shift in color. Stitching. Texture.

As if someone had cloned my wardrobe
based on photos taken from a distance.

The door wasn’t locked.

I stepped into the hallway.

It was my apartment building.
Same stains on the walls. Same flickering light near 302.

But every door had no number.
Every wall felt… off-center.

Like a dream trying to pretend it was reality.

I ran down the stairs.

The city was outside.

Normal.

Except no one looked at me. Not even once.

I stood at the signal. Waited for the walk sign.

But across the street… I saw him.

He was already there.

Holding my notebook.

Grinning.

He pointed at it.

Then turned it around.

One sentence was scrawled across the page:

> “We’ve switched places.”

I ran.

Didn’t know where. Didn’t care.

I just needed to feel real.

Needed a mirror. A reflection. Proof that I existed.

I found one.

In a convenience store bathroom.

My breath was shaking as I looked into the glass.

Same face. Same eyes. But something beneath them…

Like I was wearing myself.

Then the mirror flickered.

He was there.

Just behind me.

But when I turned around
Nothing.

I stumbled out.

Back to the streets. My heart punching through my ribs.

Then came the phone buzz.

A text.

From an unknown number.

> “Stop running. You’ll only lose yourself faster.”

I tried calling back.

Number didn’t exist.

Back at the café, he was waiting.

Same seat. Calm like nothing had changed.

“Sit,” he said.

I didn’t.

“What did you do?” I asked.

He tilted his head.

> “You ever wonder what happens when a story starts writing you?”

“What does that mean?”

> “It means this:”

He slid over my notebook.

> “You’re not writing this anymore.”

> “You’re being written.”

I flipped to the last page.

It was blank.

Until a new sentence started appearing…

letter by letter…

While I watched.

> “Chapter 4 — The one who thinks he’s real will break first.”

My hands were shaking.

I wasn’t afraid I was losing my mind.

I was afraid I was never in control of it.

CHAPTER 4 – The Pen Isn’t In Your Hand Anymore

That night, I stayed awake.
If sleep meant surrendering my mind again, I wasn’t going to risk it.

But I failed.

At 3:42 AM, I blinked.
And when I opened my eyes—

I was sitting in front of a typewriter.

Not mine. Not digital.
Just a rusty, old machine.
Keys stained, ribbon faded, but it still worked.

I looked around.
Library. Empty. Shadowed.
Dust everywhere, except on the typewriter.

A page was half-typed.

The sentence on it:

> “The protagonist has finally reached the void.”

I backed away.

Someone was standing in the corner.

He stepped into the light.

Wearing my face.
But with his voice.

He whispered:

> “This is your subconscious.
I live here.
And now, so do you.”

I grabbed the page. Tore it in half.

He didn’t flinch.

Instead, he said something that made my blood freeze:

> “You still think you’re the author, don’t you?”

I ran again.
Down aisles of books with no titles.
Shelves taller than buildings.
Endless. Repeating.

I kept running until—

Bang.

I crashed through a door.

Suddenly… I was back in my apartment.

Typewriter gone.
Desk back. Laptop on.
Only one tab open:

> [“Only I Can Write This — Chapter 5 (Draft in Progress)”]

And the screen was typing…

on its own.

Lines appeared. One by one.

> “He’s not the original.”
“He’s a backup.”
“Created in case the real one broke.”

I slammed the laptop shut.

But I couldn’t unsee those words.

My phone rang.

Unknown Number.

I answered. Silence.

Then a voice.

My voice.

> “You're doing exactly what I wrote you'd do.”

Click.

I smashed the mirror.

Blood. Glass. Still no answers.

On the wall, someone had written:

> “You are the fictional character
who started writing back.”

The worst part?

Somewhere inside,
a voice I’d never heard before whispered:

> “You already know this is true.”

CHAPTER 5 – I WAS NEVER THE NARRATOR

> “He is doing exactly what I wrote he would.”
– Entry 327, Anonymous Logbook

I didn’t leave my room the next day.
What was the point?

Every wall in this place felt… watched.
Like a camera wasn’t recording me —
something else was.

Not someone.

I opened the laptop.
Just to check. Just to breathe.

But the page was blank again.
Only one line at the top:

> Chapter 6 (Draft Loading...)

And beneath it:

> “YOU ARE BEING WRITTEN.”

No cursor blinked.

No keys worked.

I unplugged it. Threw it.
The screen stayed on.

And then — the printer started.

By itself.

Spitting out a page.
Single-spaced. Typed in Courier.
No header. No author.

Just this:

> [TRANSCRIPT LOG 52 – INTERNAL SIMULATION: SUBJECT 19-A]

Cognitive Drift Detected.
Subject has begun questioning the authorship of their own thoughts.

Behavior aligns with version 3.4.42 — known to destabilize after Entry Point Trigger is activated.

Final Sequence can now be initialized.

I didn’t understand.
None of it made sense.
But then I saw the last line of the page:

> “Subject believes his name is...”

And it was blank.

Empty.

Like even the system wasn't sure anymore.

I went to my desk drawer.
Old diaries. I never re-read them.

But now?

Every single page had changed.

All entries signed off by:

> —Not You.

Then came the email notification.

One I'd never sent.
Drafted three days ago.

Subject: "DO NOT READ"
Body:

> "The one who opens this isn't you.
He's watching you read it.
He's using your curiosity as code."

"Shut the lid before it's too late."

Too late.

The power went out.

For real, this time.
Not a glitch.

Just…

Silence.

And then —
I saw it.

Not in my mirror.
Not in my window.

In the blank TV screen reflection.

Me.
Standing.
But my hands weren’t moving.
I wasn’t blinking.
My real body was still in the chair.

He turned his head toward me.

And smiled.

I screamed.
And he screamed back —
at the exact same time.

Like a mocking echo that wasn’t delayed.

Like he was mirroring me before I moved.

Suddenly, I remembered a line I once read in a book I never finished:

> “You are not the dreamer.

You are the dream.”

And now, I think I know what that meant.

Maybe.

But only one way to be sure

CHAPTER 6 – THE THINGS I NEVER WROTE

I don’t remember writing that page.

But there it was — still warm from the printer — sitting on my desk, mocking me.

Typed in the same font, same spacing, same header:

“Only I Can Write This — Chapter 7”

Chapter 7?

I hadn’t even finished Chapter 6.

My hands trembled as I picked it up.

The words blurred, but I read them anyway.

Line by line.

Paragraph by paragraph.

Until I felt my heartbeat in my throat.

The chapter began with a sentence I had never thought of in my life:

> “He checked the folder under the floorboard and found the list of names. One of them was crossed out — the one who had figured it out too early.”

There was a floorboard in my room.

Loose.

Always had been.

And now — somehow, for the first time in years —

I was terrified of it.

I didn’t want to check.

But what else could I do?

I slid my chair aside, got on my knees, and pulled at the edge of the board.

It popped up too easily.

Beneath it, taped with old yellowing tape, was a thin file.

Dustless.

I opened it.

Inside: a printed list.

Forty-two names.

All formatted the same way — last name, then first.

Alphabetical.

But one had a thick line drawn through it, with a red marker that had bled into the paper fibers.

> VASUDEVAN, ARJUN

My stomach clenched.

That name…

That was the guy from my college who'd gone missing last year.

The one everyone thought had run away.

I remember something he told me once, while we waited for coffee at the campus canteen:

> "You ever feel like you're inside someone else's story?"

I had laughed.

He didn’t.

Suddenly, I understood why the printer was warm.
Why the keyboard was slightly tilted.
Why the cursor had moved on its own this morning.

Someone was in this room.

And not just recently.

Someone had been writing in my voice.

And worse — they knew what I would do next.

I ran to my laptop.
Opened my manuscript folder.
There was now a file titled:
Chapter 8 – Final Draft

I hadn’t written it.
I swear I hadn’t.

I opened it anyway.

The first line?

> “He opened the file he swore he never wrote, and the first line told him exactly what he was reading now.”

I slammed the laptop shut.
But it was too late.

Because now, I wasn’t scared that someone was writing in my voice.

I was scared that I wasn’t writing at all.

The worst part?

Every file on my laptop was timestamped before I even opened my eyes this morning.

It’s like…
someone already knows the story.

And maybe…
just maybe…

I’m not the writer.

I’m just a character following someone else’s plot.

CHAPTER 7 – THE MAN WHO READ MY MIND

The next morning, my phone buzzed.

Unknown Number.

Normally, I wouldn't answer.

But something told me this call…
wasn't normal.

I picked up.
Didn't speak.
Just waited.

Static.

Then a voice. Calm. Cold. Familiar, somehow.

> "Stop checking your floorboards. You're only wasting time."

My breath caught in my throat.

> “And stop calling it your book. You’re not writing it.”

Click.

The line went dead.

I wanted to scream.
Wanted to run out, leave the house, never come back.

But instead, I did the one thing I shouldn’t have:

I opened the file again.

Chapter 9 – Draft Updated.

What the hell was going on?

The document had new paragraphs now.
Things I never typed — but I was thinking about just moments earlier.

Paragraphs describing:

How I gripped my chair too tightly.

How my throat felt like sand.

How I thought about running out but didn’t.

Exactly as it happened.

Not a second too early.
Not a second too late.

It was writing me.

And worse…

It was writing me better than I could.

I paced around my room like a lunatic.

"Okay," I whispered to myself, "maybe it’s a virus. Some AI crap. Maybe someone’s remote-controlling my laptop—"

Then came the email notification.

From: onlyicanwritethis@protonmail.com
Subject: Let me help you write.

No message.

Just an attachment:
“Chapter 10 – Ready When You Are.docx”

My blood turned to ice.

Still, I opened it.

And right there, in the center of the page:

> “Meet me at the café you used to go to with Arjun. Come alone. And don’t bother calling anyone. The story won't allow it.”

I laughed nervously.
Like that would stop the fear.
But a minute later, something shattered it completely.

A second email arrived.

Subject: Stop stalling. You already left the house.

I blinked.

What?

I checked my door.

It was slightly open.
The outside world — pouring in.

I didn’t remember unlocking it.

I didn’t remember leaving.

But I looked down…

And my shoes were wet.

I reached the café in twenty minutes.
Exactly like the email told me to.

The old place hadn’t changed.

Dim lighting. Rusty fan. A single bulb flickering above the farthest table.

Someone was sitting there. Back turned. Hoodie up. Still.

I walked toward him. Slowly. One step at a time.

My palms were sweating.
My mind screamed to stop.

But I sat down anyway.

He didn’t lift his head.

He just slid a small notebook across the table.

No words.
No movement.
Just that.

I picked it up.

It was titled:

> “Only I Can Write This — Original Draft”

I flipped it open.

And on the first page, in my own handwriting:

> “This is the story of a writer who thinks he's writing a book. But the book is actually writing him.”

I looked up.

But the man was gone.

Vanished.

No footsteps.
No door creak.

Just an empty chair where he sat a moment ago.

That night, I didn’t sleep.

How could I?

Someone was writing my thoughts before I had them.

Someone knew every move I’d make before I moved.

And worst of all —

Someone was waiting for me to figure it all out.

But who?

Who the hell was doing this?

And then I saw it.

Etched into the back cover of the notebook, carved deep like a knife wound:

> “Stop asking who. Start asking when.”

CHAPTER 8 – THE WRITER WHO NEVER EXISTED

There was something strange about the bookstore.

I didn’t even remember walking into it.

I was just… there.

Surrounded by rows and rows of dusty shelves, cracked wood, and titles I’d never heard of.

No staff.

No bell above the door.

No sound.

Just the faint humming of something electric — like a printer running in the back.

I walked through the aisles.

All the books had black covers.

No names.

No blurbs.

Only numbers on the spine.

Thousands of them — catalogued like a library no one should ever visit.

And then I saw it.

On the lowest shelf.
Covered in dust, but not like the others.

A red cover.

Title in bold white font.

> “ONLY I CAN WRITE THIS”

I froze.

My heart thumped like thunder.

I bent down, picked it up, and flipped to the first page.

Blank.

Second page — blank.

Third — blank.

Until I reached Page 56.

Where it said:

> “He’s standing in the bookstore now. Holding this exact book. Reading these exact words.”

My breath stopped.

The next line:

> “He turns his head to the left — slowly — because he just heard something behind the shelf.”

I didn’t want to.

But I did.

There was a mirror on the opposite wall.
I hadn’t noticed it until now.

In it, I saw someone.

Someone who looked like me.

Exactly like me.

Only…
he wasn’t blinking.

I turned around fast.
Nothing there.

When I turned back to the mirror —
it was cracked.

Dead center, as if punched from the inside.

The book slipped from my hand.

I ran out.

Onto a street I didn’t recognize.
No traffic.
No people.
No noise.

Just fog.

But my phone buzzed.

A message from a number I didn’t save.

It said:

> “Stop rewriting what’s already been written.”

And attached was a photo.
Grainy.
Low quality.

It was me.

Standing inside the bookstore.

Reading the red book.

The photo had been taken from outside the window.

But the bookstore had no windows.

I don’t remember getting home.

All I know is —
when I opened my laptop,

The document was already open.
And at the top, it read:

> CHAPTER 9 – THE TRUTH THAT COMES TOO EARLY

CHAPTER 9 – THE TRUTH THAT COMES TOO EARLY

I didn’t write Chapter 9.

At least, I don’t remember writing it.

But when I woke up, it was already typed.
On my laptop.
Formatted perfectly.
Titled exactly as you’re reading it now.

I don’t know how to explain what it said.
Because the more I read it,
the more I felt like I wasn’t supposed to be reading it at all.

It started like this:

> This chapter will only exist if he chooses to continue.
If he stops reading now, the truth remains safe.

But if he flips the page,
the page flips him.

I stopped.

My hands were sweating.
I knew I didn’t write that.
But the laptop was mine.

The Word file was created yesterday, modified today, and saved automatically while I was asleep.

There were no saved backups.
No cloud sync.
No access from other devices.

I scrolled down.

There was only one paragraph left:

> He doesn’t realize this story was never written for a reader.
It was written for the one writing it.

I slammed the laptop shut.

My breathing was heavy.
I felt watched.
Paranoid.

I opened my phone’s camera.
Looked at myself.

I looked fine.

But when I switched to the front camera — the selfie view — something changed.

There was something written on my neck.

Backwards.
Faint, like a bruise.

I ran to the mirror.

It was a word.

> AUTHOR

Like someone had branded it on me while I slept.

That’s when I noticed the post-it on the wall.
I swear it hadn’t been there before.

It read:

> “Don’t delete the book. Or you get erased.”

That night, I dreamt of pages.

Hundreds of them.

Each one had my name written at the bottom —
But none of them were in my handwriting.

At the end of the dream, someone leaned in and whispered:

> “You’re not writing the story.
The story is writing you.”

CHAPTER 10 – THE CHARACTER WHO READ ME

There’s a new comment on the manuscript.

I didn’t post it.
It’s not from my account.
Not even from my country.

But it’s there—on the draft I uploaded in secret just to test formatting.

The comment reads:

> “I know how this ends.
But I’m not ready to watch you find out.”

It’s from a username I’ve never seen before:
StepByStep

The same name I was going to use for Chapter 1.

My heart sank.
I opened the file again.

Now, the chapters were changing themselves.

Each title began shifting—morphing—without me typing a thing.
Chapter 1 was now:

> Chapter 1 – Only I Can Write This

Chapter 2?

> Chapter 2 – But You're Not The Only One

Then I saw Chapter 10's new title begin to write itself, letter by letter, like someone was typing live:

> Chapter 10 – The Character Who Read Me

I felt cold.
My hands trembling.

Was I the writer, or was I the story?
Was someone following my drafts?

Then… something else happened.

The file suddenly opened a second document.

Untitled.
Blank.

Then, text began appearing.

Slowly.
One word at a time.

> You made it to Chapter 10.
That means you didn’t stop when you should’ve.

You ignored the warnings.
You thought it was fiction.

But here’s the truth.

You were never the writer.

You were just allowed to believe you were.

Because if you knew who really wrote this,

you’d beg to forget it.

I tried closing the document.

It stayed open.

I unplugged the laptop.

The screen stayed on.

My own reflection stared back from the black gloss of the screen… except…

There was a second me over my shoulder.

Watching.

Smiling.

I turned.
No one.

A sound.

My phone buzzed.

It was a notification.

“New document saved: ‘The One Who Is Reading This.’”

I hadn’t typed it.

But the file was there.

When I opened it, it only said:

> “If he reads Chapter 11, it begins.

And this time, the ending chooses him.”

CHAPTER 11 – THE PAGE THAT READ YOU BACK

There’s something different about this chapter.

Not the way it’s written.
Not the tone.
It’s something more primal.

Like it’s watching you as you read it.
Like… it knows who you are.

I didn’t write this one.
Not with my fingers.
Not with my thoughts.

It wrote itself.

When I opened the draft folder this morning, it was already here.

No timestamp.
No metadata.

No file path.

Just one title, sitting between Chapter 10 and Chapter 12:

> Chapter 11 – The Page That Read You Back

I almost didn’t click it.

Almost.

But the curiosity was louder than fear.

The chapter began mid-sentence.

Like it was already in progress long before I got here.

> “—because he didn’t understand that some books don’t tell stories.

They trap them.

And some readers aren’t reading for entertainment.

They’re reading… to find themselves.”

Then, in a sudden shift, the text addressed me directly:

> “Welcome back, Author.

How does it feel to read the words you never typed?

To stare into a page and realize the page is staring into you?”

I slammed the laptop shut.

Waited.

Silence.

Until my phone pinged again.

A message from no one, no app, no sender:

> “You closed the book,
But the story doesn’t need your permission anymore.”

I ran a system check.

The file wasn't there.

No evidence it had ever existed.

But then I opened Chapter 10 again to double check.

At the very bottom—beneath my "End of Chapter 10" sign-off—there was a new line that hadn't been there yesterday:

> "He read Chapter 11.

He accepted his role.

And now, the Author will be written."

My blood froze.

That's when I realized what this whole book had been about.

Not a thriller.

Not a mystery.

Not even a story.

It was a setup.

A trap laid for one person only:

Me.

And maybe… you.

Because if you’re reading this now,
then maybe you’ve become part of it too.

Still think you're the reader?

CHAPTER 12 – THE AUTHOR WHO NEVER EXISTED

Let’s talk about the manuscript.

The one I’ve been working on.

The one you have been reading.

The one that started as fiction...
and is now rewriting reality.

I thought I created the story.

Typed each word.
Sculpted each chapter.
Pushed the characters to their limits.

But the truth came crashing last night.

I didn’t write this story.

I was written by it.

At exactly 3:00 a.m., I woke to a sound.

Not a scream. Not a knock.
Not a voice.

Just… typing.

My laptop was open.
Cursor blinking.
And letters appearing.

By themselves.

A new chapter forming.
Line by line. Word by word.

But what shook me wasn't the supernatural.

It was the content.

It said:

> "Chapter 12 — The Author Who Never Existed.

You are not real.

You are a construct. A vessel.

Created so this story could escape.”

I laughed at first.

Delirium. Sleep-deprivation.
Classic horror trope, right?

But then it typed my full name.
My exact age.
The day I began writing this.

The thoughts I had but never told anyone.

The pain I buried.
The secrets I swore I’d never let out.

Every. Single. One.

How?

I opened my cloud drive.
My drafts.
My journals.
Everything.

All my files… gone.

Replaced with one single document.

“Only I Can Write This.”

I clicked it.

The contents?

This entire story.
Already finished.

Word for word.

Including Chapter 12.

And worse—Chapter 20.

The final chapter.

One I haven’t written yet.

In that moment I realized…

This isn’t a book.

This is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

It’s alive.

It’s aware.

It’s documenting the collapse of the person who thought he was its creator.

And now, you—yes, you—are holding it in your hands.

So ask yourself this:

Who told you to read this?

Why are you still here?

Are you the reader?

Or are you the next character?

Because if you're feeling something crawling under your skin right now…

It’s already rewriting you.

CHAPTER 13 – AN ERROR IN THE SYSTEM

There was a flicker.

Not outside.
Not on a screen.
Inside me.

Like reality glitched for a microsecond.
And something behind the curtain whispered:
“He’s noticing.”

I blinked.
My reflection didn’t.

Let me explain.

I’ve started testing the story.

Copying a page.
Pasting it into Word.
Editing it. Saving it.

But no matter what I type…
When I open the file again —
It always reverts back to the original version.

As if it wants to stay the way it was written.

Wants to stay un-touched.
Unedited.
Unstoppable.

That’s when I noticed the time stamps.

Every document I’ve created under the title
"Only I Can Write This"
has a modified date… from before I was born.

1999.
I was born in 2005.

How the hell can that be?

How can a story I haven’t even finished
be created before I even existed?

Unless...

I didn’t write it.
I was assigned to it.

A vessel.

An “author” in name only.
To carry the story out into the world.

And every reader is another node.
Another corrupted data point.
Another page turning, unknowingly fueling its expansion.

You think this is fiction?
Then tell me:

Why is it speaking to you?

I opened the Chapter 20 file.
I had to.

I had to know what happens to me.
To you.
To everyone who reads this.

But the file didn’t open.

Instead, a message appeared.

Plain text.
White on black.

> “You weren’t supposed to reach this point.
Return to Chapter One.
Forget what you’ve learned.
Or continue…

…and cease to be the reader.”

I stared. Frozen.

And then — the power in my house cut out.

Complete blackout.

Laptop battery died seconds later.

I lit a candle.
Tried to take a breath.

That’s when I saw the post-it on my mirror.

In my own handwriting.

Except…
I didn’t write it.

It read:

> “Don’t believe anything after Chapter 14.”

I’m not at Chapter 14 yet.
And I swear to you — I’ve never written that note in my life.

So who did?

Or better yet…

Why would I warn myself against my own story?

CHAPTER 14 – THE MAN WHO WROTE ME

It was 2:03 a.m.

No lights.
No signal.
No sound except my own breathing,
and even that didn’t feel like mine anymore.

I couldn’t sleep.

Not after what I saw last night.

Not after that message.

> “Don’t believe anything after Chapter 14.”

But that wasn’t the most disturbing part.

Because at exactly 2:04 a.m. —

I heard a notification ping.

My phone was dead.
Wi-Fi: off.
No battery.
No apps.

Still… one single message appeared on my cracked screen:

> “This is Chapter 14.”

I don’t remember typing what you’re reading.
But it’s here.
In my documents.

Perfectly formatted.
Chapter title bolded.
Pacing sharp.
Tone exactly how I write when I’m locked in.

But I didn’t write this.

I didn’t write this.

Unless…

What if this story is writing itself?
And I’m just the character?

That would explain why my thoughts are starting to repeat.

Why memories I know are mine suddenly feel secondhand.
Like I borrowed them.
Like someone uploaded them into me.

Like I’ve been pre-coded.

I dug through old backups. USBs. Cloud drives.

That’s when I found something.

A video.
Titled simply: “Author.mp4”

The thumbnail?
A man. Blurry face.
Looks exactly like me.
Except for one detail…

He’s wearing a T-shirt that reads:

> “Only I Can Write This”

I hit play.

The screen glitched.

Heavy static.
Then — his voice.

Calm.
Precise.
Too familiar.

> “If you’re watching this, the story has activated.
It is no longer under your control.
You are now part of the narrative.”

I leaned closer.

The man looked directly into the lens.

> “I was the original author. But I didn’t finish it.
So it found someone else…
You.”

His eyes sharpened.

> “You don’t remember writing Chapter 14 because you didn’t.
You became Chapter 14.”

Static.

Black screen.

Then one final frame.

Text. All caps.

> “DO NOT READ CHAPTER 20.”

I shut the laptop.

Stared into the darkness.

This is fiction.
This has to be fiction.
I’m just writing a novel. A thriller. Something fun, something twisted.

But here’s the problem:

The “man in the video”…
He had a scar on his left cheek.

I’ve never had one.

Until now.

I looked in the mirror.

It’s there.

Fresh.
Red.
Like someone drew it onto my body with a story I didn’t write.

I think I’m being written.

And the one writing me?

Might not even be human.

CHAPTER 15 – THE DELETED CHAPTER

There’s a chapter in this book you’ll never find.

Not on paper.
Not in memory.
Not even in the backups I swore I kept.

Because Chapter 15 was never meant to be read.
It was meant to be experienced.

Let me explain.

Last night, I tried deleting the story.

All of it.

Every chapter. Every file.
I smashed my laptop, factory reset my phone, burned the hard copies.

But when I woke up this morning…

The manuscript was still there.
On my wall.

Written in black ink.

One sentence per line.

Like it had been tattooed across my room by a ghost with perfect grammar.

And the first line?

> “Chapter 15 begins the moment you try to forget Chapter 14.”

I didn’t remember writing that.
But I recognized the handwriting.

Mine.

Or... almost mine.

There was a difference.
Too neat.
Too calculated.
As if someone — or something — was imitating me, but better.

I backed away, heart pounding.

And that’s when I noticed something else.

On my desk…

My phone.

Charged.
Unlocked.
And open to the Notes app.

New note. Titled:

> “The Deleted Chapter”

I opened it.

Only one sentence:

> “You’re not the reader. You’re the story.”

Suddenly, the room changed.

Flickered.

Reality… flickered.

My hands dissolved into text.
My reflection glitched.
Not digitally — literally.
Like I was being typed into existence.
Line by line. Letter by letter.

And then, I heard typing.

Mechanical. Rhythmic. Close.

Not keys on my laptop.
Not a phone keyboard.

Typewriter.

And from the corner of my eye…

I saw a figure.
Sitting in my chair.
Back turned.
Typing.

Fast.

Clack. Clack. Clack.

I couldn’t breathe.
I couldn’t move.

Then the figure turned its head,
just slightly — enough to see the side of its face.

It was me.

But not exactly.

A better version.

Calmer.
Smarter.
Darker.

Smiling.

He whispered — almost laughing:

> “You’re the twist. I’m the writer.”

Everything went black.

I woke up in a room I’ve never seen before.

Four walls.
All covered in pages.

Printed pages.
From this story.

Each page had a red stamp across it:

> “UNAUTHORIZED CHARACTER.”

I screamed.
No sound came out.

I punched the walls — they turned to dust.

And behind one wall… was a mirror.

I looked into it.

And the reflection I saw?

Wasn’t me.

It was him.

Typing.

Watching.

Waiting.

That’s when I understood:

> Chapter 15 isn’t part of the story.
It’s the virus inside it.

The chapter that infects the reader.
Deletes the line between fiction and truth.
Erases the boundary between character and creator.

So now I leave you with this warning:

If you’ve made it this far…
You’re no longer just reading.

You’re being written.

And the one writing you?

Already knows how your story ends.

CHAPTER 16 – SOMETHING

Aarav noticed an envelope lying dead-center on the dining table.

No stamp. No branding.

Just his name — handwritten in neat, curved letters that somehow felt... familiar.

He hadn’t heard the doorbell. No knock. No footsteps.

He had been home all morning. Alone.

His fingers hesitated, then reached for it.

It felt unusually cold, like it had been sitting in ice.

He opened it.

A single page.

"Dear Aarav,

I’m sorry for what I’ve done.

I had no choice. I had to let you believe this was your story. That you were the one piecing it all together. That you were the one being haunted, followed, forgotten.

But it was me all along.

I planted every page.
Every name.
Every scene.

You were never the author.
You were the character I created.

— Only I Can Write This."

The letter fell from his hands.

His lungs stopped.
The air in the room thickened, like breathing through smoke.
He looked around. Same walls. Same furniture.
But suddenly… everything looked slightly wrong.

The painting on the wall — had it always had a red hue?

The clock — why was it ticking backwards?

His eyes darted to his laptop. He rushed over and opened the document.

The manuscript — the one he had been writing.

All chapters were there.

Up to Chapter 15.

Chapter 16… was blank.

But then, the cursor began to blink.

And typed itself.

“You’re finally catching up, Aarav.
You were never writing this.
You were just reading what I gave you permission to see.”

He slammed the laptop shut.

His pulse was hammering.

He turned toward the mirror in the hallway — his reflection stood still, frozen. But—

His hand raised.

The reflection didn’t move.

Instead… it smiled.

Aarav didn’t.

He backed away slowly.

Blink.

The mirror showed only him again. No smile. No delay.

His hand trembled as he looked down — the envelope was back in his hand.

But how?

He had dropped it. He saw it fall.

A sharp sting in his palm.

A fresh paper cut.

But it was deep — almost surgical.

He stood there, in the silence of the apartment, blood slowly dripping onto the letter.

And for the first time in his life…

Aarav wasn't sure if he was real.

CHAPTER 17 – THE WRITER WHO WAS NEVER BORN

Aarav didn’t sleep that night.

Not even a blink.

Every time he closed his eyes, he saw words forming on pages — not typed, but carved. As if someone was scratching sentences into his brain.

By morning, the line between memory and manuscript had collapsed.

He no longer knew which parts he had written… and which parts had been written into him.

He needed answers.

He rushed to the library — not the public one, but the restricted archive. The one that required university clearance. He used his old ID. Somehow, they let him in.

He didn’t know what he was looking for.

But as he walked past the dusty stacks, his feet stopped on their own.

Row H. Section 7.

A single black book.
No title.
No author.
No dust.

It looked… new. Too new.

He pulled it out.
Opened to the first page.

And froze.

CHAPTER 1: AARAV

CHAPTER 2: THE GIRL IN THE TRAIN

CHAPTER 3: THE UNDELIVERED LETTER

CHAPTER 4: THE AUTHOR WHO NEVER SIGNED

CHAPTER 5: THE SHADOW OF A NAME

CHAPTER 6: THE PAGE THAT BLED

It was his story.

Every chapter.

Every word.

Even Chapter 16 — the one that typed itself.

This was impossible.

He flipped to the last written chapter.

CHAPTER 20: THE WRITER WHO WAS NEVER BORN

Written in bold.

No pages beneath it.

The rest of the book was blank.

But before he could flip back…

A fresh line of ink began appearing on the empty page.

Right in front of him.

“He found the book. But too late.
The story was already inside him.
And he never wrote a word.”

Aarav dropped the book.

His hands were trembling.

Something was fundamentally wrong.

He ran home.

Straight to his manuscript folder.

The document titled Only I Can Write This was open.

And the text had changed.

There were words he didn’t remember writing.

Descriptions of places he had visited that day. Thoughts he had moments ago. Conversations he hadn’t even had yet.

He scrolled to the very end.

A new line blinked into existence.

“Chapter 17: The Reader Realizes He Was Always a Character.”

And then…

His screen went black.

A single reflection stared back at him.

Not his.

But a face he hadn’t seen in years.

His childhood best friend.
The one who disappeared.
The one who used to write stories with him.

The one who died.

But the reflection spoke, even as his own lips stayed still:

“You took credit for my story, Aarav.
Now let me finish it.”

CHAPTER 18 – THE GHOSTWRITER

Aarav stood frozen.

Staring at the black screen.
At the reflection that didn't belong to him.
The words echoed:

> "You took credit for my story, Aarav.
Now let me finish it."

But how? Who was this?

He whispered a name he hadn't spoken in years.

"Reyan?"

Reyan.
His childhood best friend.
The one who disappeared at 13.
The one they said jumped off the school terrace.
No body was found.

He was the real writer.
The kid genius.
The one who used to write wild stories and claim,

> “One day, I’ll write a story that outlives me.”

And then… he was gone.

But Aarav had kept Reyan’s notebook.
Used the ideas.
Built his own writing career.
Became who Reyan was supposed to be.

He was breathing heavily now.

He opened Reyan’s old notebook, which he still kept hidden inside a locked drawer.

He hadn’t touched it in years.

But as he flipped the pages…
He saw it wasn’t old anymore.

The paper looked… fresh.
The ink still wet.
New chapters were written inside.

On the last page, one sentence pulsed like a living thing:

> “You didn’t write it, Aarav.
I just let you believe you did.”

Suddenly, he heard typing.

But he wasn’t touching the keyboard.

His laptop glowed back to life, and the document updated again — typing on its own.

CHAPTER 18: THE GHOSTWRITER RETURNS

The door creaked open behind him.

He turned — nobody.

But the scent of burning ink filled the air.

Then…
A piece of paper slid out from under his door.

He picked it up.

Typed. Clean. New.

> “Every writer leaves a part of his soul in his story.
But you never wrote one.
You borrowed mine.”

His fingers trembled as he opened the “Only I Can Write This” file one more time.

He tried to type.

The letters jumbled.

Every key he hit typed something different.

He pressed “A” — it typed “Reyan”.

He pressed “I” — it typed “Liar”.

He pressed “Delete” — the lights in the room flickered.

He dropped to the ground, clutching his head.

He wasn’t sure what was real anymore.

Then he remembered…

Reyan once told him:

> “The greatest story ever told…
is the one that tricks the writer into thinking it’s his.”

And now… it was happening.

Aarav wasn’t writing a story.

He was the story.

Chapter 19 – THE UNFINISHED ENDING

Aarav hadn’t slept in three days.
Every night, the typing continued on its own.
Every night, new chapters were added — not by him.

And every chapter… was personal.
Too personal.
Stories only he knew.
But written in a voice that wasn’t his.

He contacted his editor.

> “Who’s been accessing my drafts?”

“No one,” she said. “It’s locked under your account. Only you have the password.”

He called the publishing site.

> “How did the chapter go live yesterday? I didn’t upload it.”

They replied:

> “Sir, the file was uploaded from your IP. You clicked publish.”

But he didn’t.

He was in the hospital, after blacking out the previous night.

Then came the most terrifying part.

Someone sent him a signed copy of his own book.
To his apartment.

The courier claimed Aarav himself had ordered it.

He opened the front page.

His photo was inside.
Not one he had ever taken.

And below it:

> Written by Reyan (The real author)

He tore through his apartment.
Ripped apart his writing desk.

Behind the false wall in the drawer…
Was an old flash drive.
No label. Just black tape.

Hands shaking, he plugged it in.

One folder.

Titled: “YOU DIDN’T WRITE THIS”

Inside:
Videos.
Recordings of him… talking to no one.
Arguing, laughing, whispering.

In some, he screamed:

> “You’re dead! You’re DEAD!”

In others:

> “No one will know. They think I’m the genius now.”

And one final video.
Aarav, staring at the camera, whispering:

> “He still writes…
every night… while I’m asleep.”

Aarav collapsed to the floor.

He couldn’t breathe.
His identity… his success… his life — all built on a lie?

Or worse…
on someone else.

Someone who maybe never died.
Or maybe…

Never existed.

He opened his manuscript.
Clicked to the very last page.

One new line appeared:

> “If you really believe you wrote this story…
open the door.”

A knock echoed through his apartment.

Three slow knocks.

He stared at the door.

His legs wouldn't move.

Then his phone buzzed.

A new message.

From: Aarav (his own number)

> “You’re not the writer.
You’re just the pen.”

His mouth went dry.

The walls around him began to feel smaller.
The lights dimmed.

The book was almost done.
Just one chapter left.

And someone else was ready to write the ending.

Chapter 20 – ONLY I CAN WRITE THIS

Aarav stood in front of the mirror, breathing heavily. His eyes were bloodshot. His mind raced through a thousand flashes — names, screams, ink, laughter, silence.

Everything.

Everyone.

All the memories came flooding in.

He wasn't reading a story. He was **living it.**

He stepped closer to the mirror.

The reflection did not match.

It blinked late. It tilted its head the other way. It was **him** — and **not him**.

The reflection smiled first.

"So… you finally remembered."

"Took you long enough."

Aarav whispered, "Who are you?"

The reflection grinned.

"I'm the reason people went missing."

"The reason this story exists."

“I’m you… without guilt.”

The lights flickered.

Pages fell from the ceiling like ash. The manuscript sat on the floor, still unfinished. The final chapter remained blank.

Suddenly, the reflection turned and looked behind *his* side of the glass — revealing a **desk**.

Someone was sitting at it.

Typing.

Aarav watched as the writer behind the mirror turned to face him.

It was him. **Older. Wiser. Calm.**

“You are not crazy,” the older version said.

“You’re a writer.”

“But you buried the truth so deep in fiction… even *you* couldn’t find your way out.”

The mirror shattered.

The room folded into ink.

All the memories aligned.

The girl he loved?

A character he wrote in his darkest days of loneliness. The friends he trusted? All figments to test his own mind.

The horror?

His own design.

And yet…

He had not broken. He had not vanished.

He had remembered. He had survived the most dangerous story ever written…

By himself.

Tears streamed down Aarav's face as the broken world around him began rebuilding — this time, not with fear. Not with lies.

But with **truth.**

He walked to the desk.

Sat down.

Looked at the final blank page.

Took a deep breath.

And smiled.

"Only I can write this," he said.

"Because only I survived it."

And he did.

He published the book.

It became a **worldwide sensation**.

Not because it was terrifying.

But because readers could feel it wasn't just fiction.

It was **him**. His pain. His genius. His escape.

Years later, at a book signing, a reader asked:

“Why did you write such a disturbing story… and still give it a happy ending?”

Aarav smiled and replied:

“Because I wanted to prove something.”

“Even the darkest minds… can rewrite themselves.”

“Even monsters… can become authors.”

“And some stories aren’t meant to be read…”

“…They’re meant to be survived.”

I NEED TO SAY YOU THIS

Author Says

a girl has been stepping quietly out of my imagination.

I haven’t seen her in the real world.
I’ve never heard her voice.
I don’t even know her name.

And yet… she lingers.
In dreams I don’t remember having.
In sentences I don’t remember writing.
In pauses between thoughts, where only she seems to live.

I used to think I was writing her.
But now…
sometimes I wonder if it’s the other way around.

She shows up when I sit down to create—
guiding my hand before I know where the story is going.
Her presence moves through the words,
soft, subtle, undeniable.

I don’t know who she is.

Or why she chose me.

But I feel her everywhere—in the rhythm, in the silence, in the spark behind every line.

And maybe…

I’m just the story she’s been telling in secret.

Every word you read from me is just another kiss I leave in her soul.

I'm Manjunath V.C. 19 years old and I'm the author of this book